



*Life up close.*

**Hastings  
Museum**

Natural & Cultural History  
Planetarium • Theatre



## **MISSION STATEMENT**

The Hastings Museum brings to life the natural and cultural history of Hastings, Adams County and the Great Plains of Nebraska. The museum connects Nebraska to the world and universe through educational programs, exhibits and films, inspiring greater public respect for and understanding of our past and future.

The Hastings Museum has grown into a multifaceted organization over the last 85 years. The museum offers a variety of subject matter through exhibits, films and programs. It continues to offer a package that includes museum exhibits and programs, the J.M. McDonald Planetarium and the Lied Super Screen Theatre.

## **VISION STATEMENT**

The Hastings Museum will invest its time and resources strategically to build on its past successes and revitalize its facilities, programs and financial capabilities for the future, to become the leading natural and cultural history museum of Nebraska and the Great Plains.



Dear friends,

What an amazing year at Hastings Museum! We saw significant progress in regards to Museum exhibits, community partnerships, marketing and finance. This was also the first year for the 2015-2019 Strategic Plan, which was developed in 2015 and revisited often as we aimed to set priorities for various projects.

While Museum memberships ebb and flow in an almost cyclical pattern, we are on the upswing and saw [Museum memberships reach their highest level in 17 years](#). This is important because it shows the strength of the Museum in the community and supports our non-tax income. While it's possible every member may have a different reason for joining, we believe three factors played a part:

- » Opening of the Nature Nook provides a hands-on attraction for families and grandparents. This is simply an incredible space that drives repeat visits, which drives memberships.
- » A new digital marquee better informs the community about Museum activities, presents a positive image of the Museum and helps create excitement.
- » The Museum continues to be a good value for visitors and families.

The Nature Nook opened to the public just six days before this fiscal year, so most of the immediate reaction was felt in this year. Permanent exhibits take time to plan, design and fund. The Nook itself was four years in the making and this fiscal year was the one that benefitted from all of that hard work.

Plans to gain a digital marquee for the Museum actually began six years ago when talks began on how best to make it happen—but fizzled due to budget constraints. This year, we were able to [partner with the Hastings Community Redevelopment Authority](#), which initiated the project, the Hastings Museum Foundation and the city of Hastings to purchase a high quality video board and related materials. The new sign is controlled from within the Museum, can play brief videos and does a much better job of highlighting activities in the Museum while giving a more up-to-date impression to potential visitors.

And finally, the Museum's budget. While the Museum has ended its fiscal year in the black regularly over the last decade, this year stands out because [Museum income was greater than budgeted](#). This helped create one of the largest budget surpluses in recent memory, some \$28,000, which was returned to the city to reduce debt incurred in the late 1990s and early 2000s.

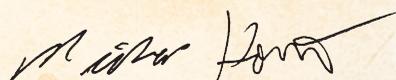
We appreciate the work of staff who helped make this year a success, and the continued support of city staff, the mayor, City Council, Trustees and, importantly, the community and visitors from across the country. Your continued backing of Hastings Museum [makes Hastings a better community for us all](#).

With gratitude,



[Rebecca Matticks](#)

*Hastings Museum Director*



[Michael Howie](#)

*President, Board of Trustees*



Mother and daughter playing with a hands-on balancing table in the temporary Nano Exhibit.

## Exhibits & Collections

**Six Temporary Exhibits:** *Nanotechnology Exhibit*, UNL; *The Romance of the Moon*, Sheldon Museum of Art; *Architecture*, Studio Art Quilter Associates of Nebraska; *The Way We Worked*, Smithsonian Museums on Main Street; *Dutton Lainson Anniversary Exhibit*, Hastings Museum staff in cooperation with D-L employees; *4th Grade Native American dioramas*, Hastings Public Schools.

**Permanent Exhibit Upgrades:** A new case was built to better exhibit our collection of bats; Safety glass was installed in the remaining south end dioramas so barriers could be removed; Graphics were updated in the Kool-Aid Exhibit; Graphic panels with hands-on items were added in the main diorama hall; the large Conroy Case on the south end of the main diorama hall was removed, those animal mounts were placed in other existing exhibits; the Polar bear diorama was renovated, the foreground was resurfaced and a seal breathing hole was added.

**Ongoing Projects:** Collections storage remains a significant concern. Considerable time was devoted to researching and planning long-term solutions. Secured funding for Kool-Aid exhibit companion book; research began.

“ We spent every Saturday afternoon here 65 years ago. ”

— Maurine Hatting, visitor from St. Paul, MN

## Theatre & Planetarium

**Large format films & special theatre bookings:** *Tiny Giants*, BBC Earth; *Jean Michel Cousteau's Secret Ocean*, 3D Entertainment Distribution; *National Parks Adventure*, MacGillivray Freeman Films; *The Gruffalo* and *The Gruffalo's Child*, Magic Light Pictures; *Queen Rock Montreal*, Specticast; and *The Who Live in Hyde Park*, More2Screen.

**Theatre Upgrades:** A 380-square-foot stage was added to the Museum's theatre. In years past the space could not accommodate this upgrade, but as films now project in slightly less deep dimensions, a stage no longer blocks the theatre's screen. This project was funded by the Hastings Public Library in exchange for their temporary residence in our building. Additional support was provided by Give Hastings Day donors and a Sunnyside grant.

**Ongoing Projects:** As the planetarium's main components have begun to show their age—star projector, control panel, seats, and carpet—we began the process of researching grants and projection systems to keep our planetarium offerings competitive.

A group of students enjoy the Many Moccasin Dancers on the new stage in the Theater.



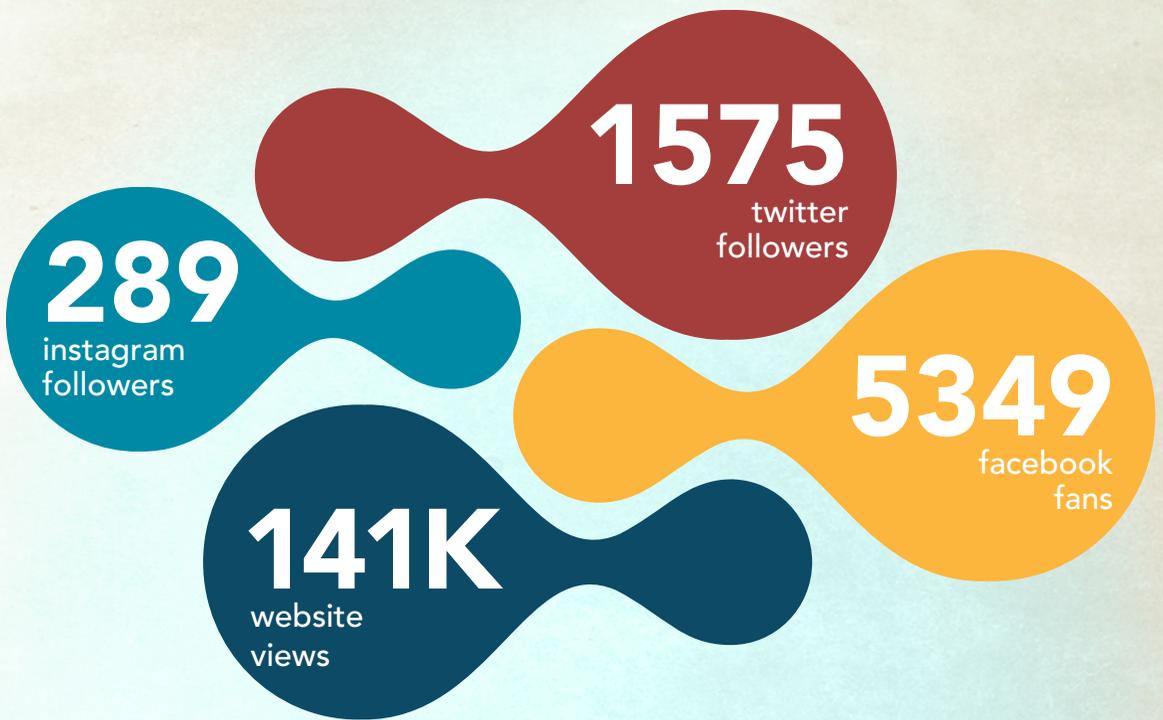
## Education: Programs & Events

In 2015 our annual Native American Festival (NAF) drew 547 people and again spotlighted the Many Moccasins Dance Troupe. This year's festival highlighted the lives of contemporary Native Americans and featured an enhanced partnership with Hastings College's education students. Spirits & Interesting People (SIP)—an event for adults designed to blend a cocktail party with traditional museum programming—continues to grow in attendance and appeal to new audiences. Two perennial strengths are our Preschool Playdays and Summer Fun classes for youth. Combined they served 453 kids and addressed 25 unique themes! The Brooking Room, a classroom that had been used only seasonally, received updates to its heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems which greatly increased its functionality (funded through our partnership with the Hastings Public Library). And to facilitate better communication with patrons during events, new speakers were installed throughout the Museum.

**Ongoing Projects:** The education department continually works to incorporate new teaching techniques and to keep its lesson plans compatible with Nebraska State Standards. Delivering school programs to K-6 students is a vital component of the department and they are currently researching Virtual Field Trips (VFT) as a way to reach out to new markets.

*Curator of Education, Russanne Hoff teaching a group of kids about animal skulls.*





## Marketing & Visitor Services

Marketing in this fiscal year focused largely on launching the Nature Nook. With a supplemental budget from the Hastings Museum Foundation and a grant from the Nebraska Tourism Commission, the effort was able to reach far beyond the Tri-Cities. The promotional package included billboards, video spots that ran in our Theatre and statewide on NET, radio ads, donor recognition, printed materials, a large web presence, and a broad paid social media push that extended into Iowa and Kansas. This collection of materials won the Mountain-Plains Museum Association (MPMA) publication design award in the Promotional Package category. The word is out and patron feedback was strong: the Nature Nook is a hit!

**Ongoing projects:** While the new digital marquee gave us an important new tool to communicate with the public, the fact remains that people are busier than ever. We are constantly on the hunt for better ways to connect and communicate with patrons, members, and potential partners.

-  Twitter  
@HastingsMuseum
-  Snapchat  
hmuseum
-  YouTube  
Hastings Museum
-  Instagram  
Hastings Museum
-  Facebook  
HastingsMuseumFan

## Financials

With multiple funding sources—including the citizens of and visitors to Hastings—the Hastings Museum director, staff and Board of Trustees place significant emphasis on financial stewardship. This includes developing a balanced budget, partnering with the Hastings Museum Foundation and prioritizing key projects. The staff and board, in conjunction with city officials, citizens and the Foundation, also develop a strategic plan, which guides decisions and ensures the Museum will remain a jewel of the Queen City.

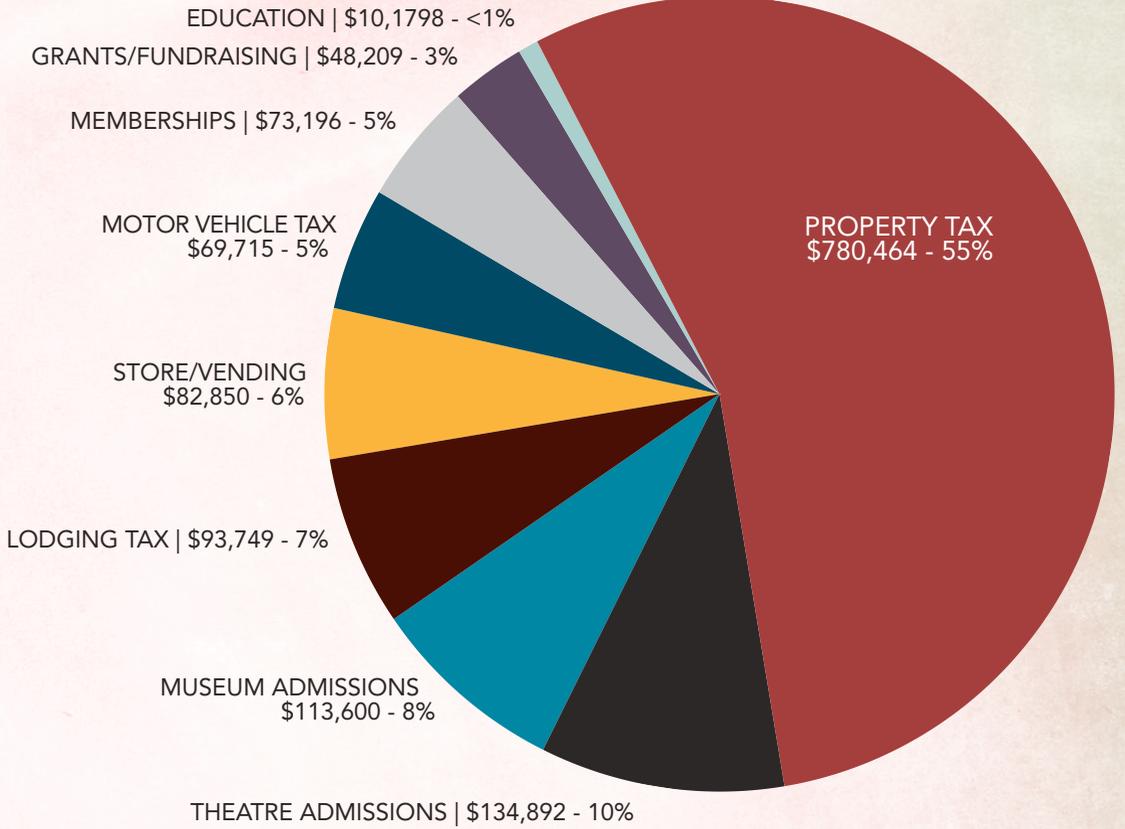


*Children enjoying the Kool-Aid stand in our Kool-Aid: Discover the Dream exhibit.*

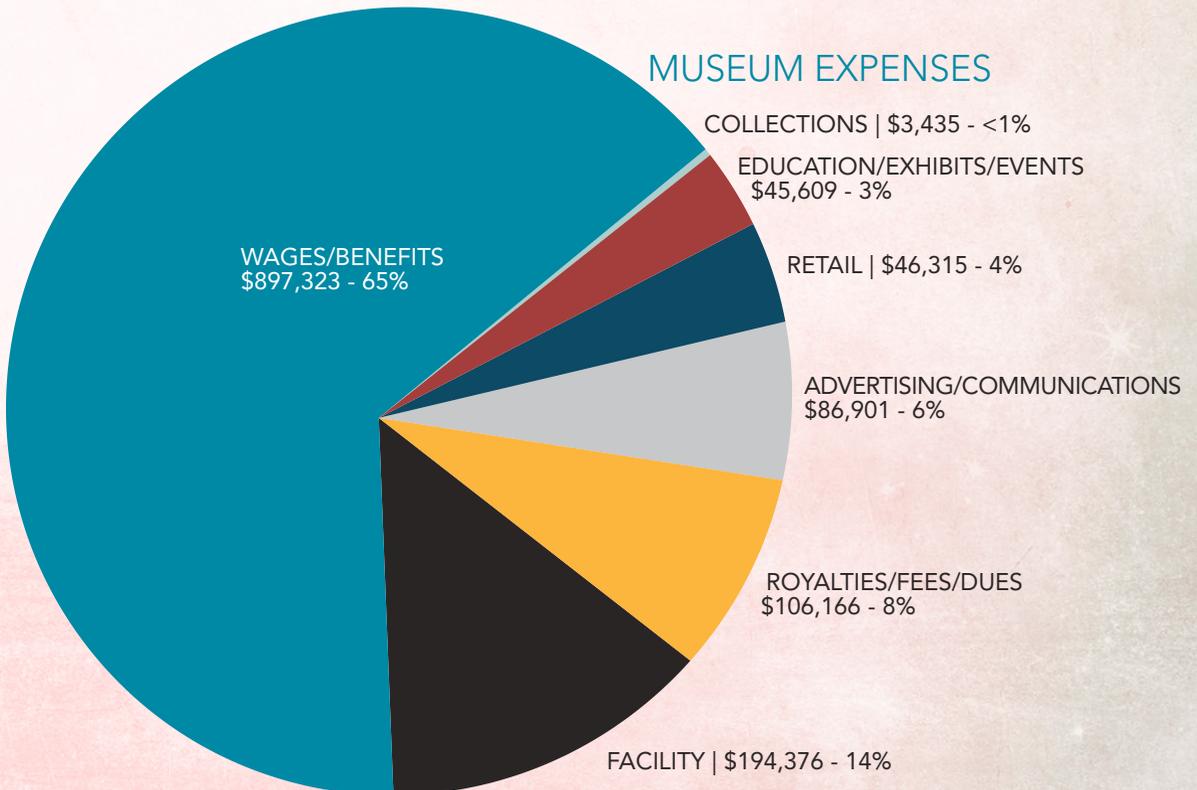
**Came to see the Kool-Aid exhibit and were wowed by everything else!**

— Heidi Family, visitors from Tucson, AZ

## MUSEUM INCOME



## MUSEUM EXPENSES



# “We love the Museum! Now that we’re members we stop in several times a month.”

— Rachel Gnagy, Hastings  
Mother of Hosanna 9m,  
Malachi 2y & Isaiah 3y

Museum memberships  
roared back after the  
opening of the Nature Nook.

Memberships hit a 17-year high this year, and non-member attendance increased modestly. There was a bump in theatre attendance when the 3D digital projection system opened in October 2011, but attendance has since stabilized within a narrow range. A clear uptick in Museum attendance this year was likely due to the opening of the Nature Nook. We are hopeful this upward trend will continue and set a new, and higher, plateau.



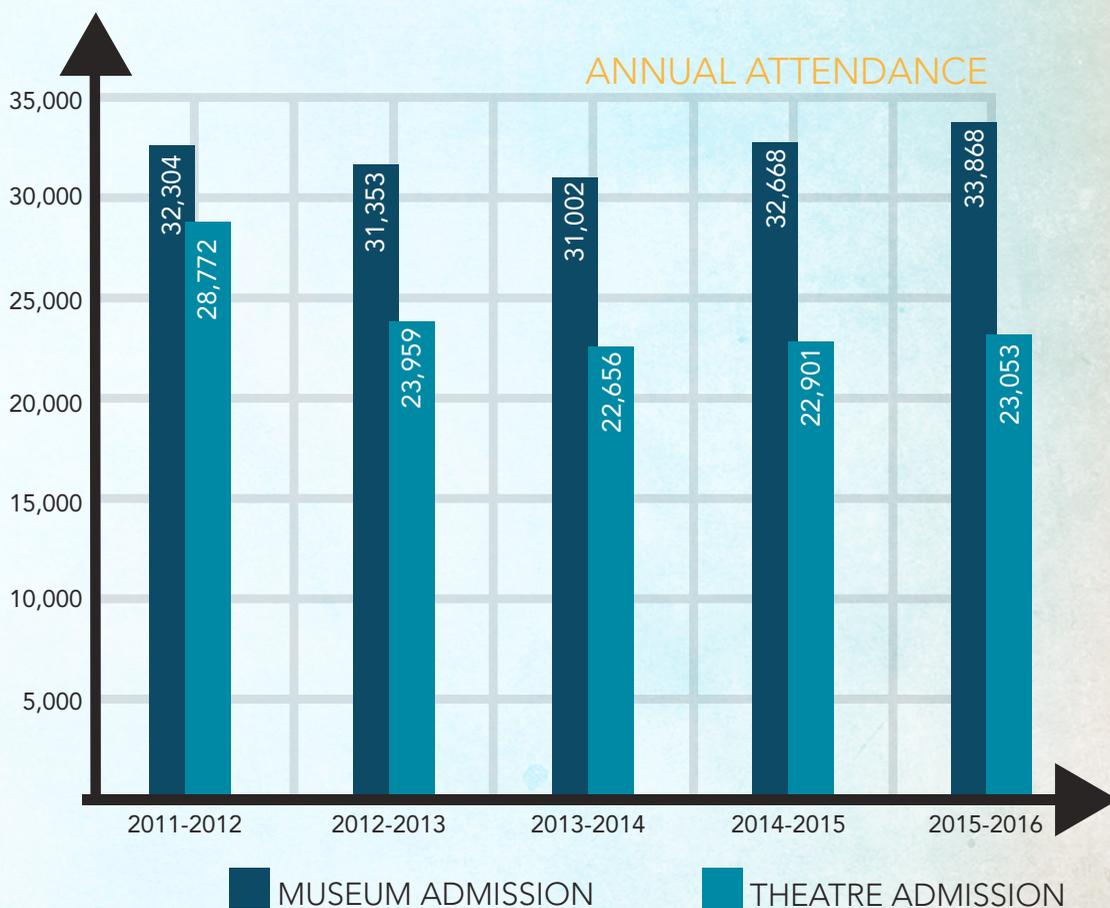
*The underground tunnel in the  
new Nature Nook exhibit.*

2015-16 had the most Museum Memberships in **17** years.

We have **1,105** memberships that include **5,862** members. A **15%** increase in

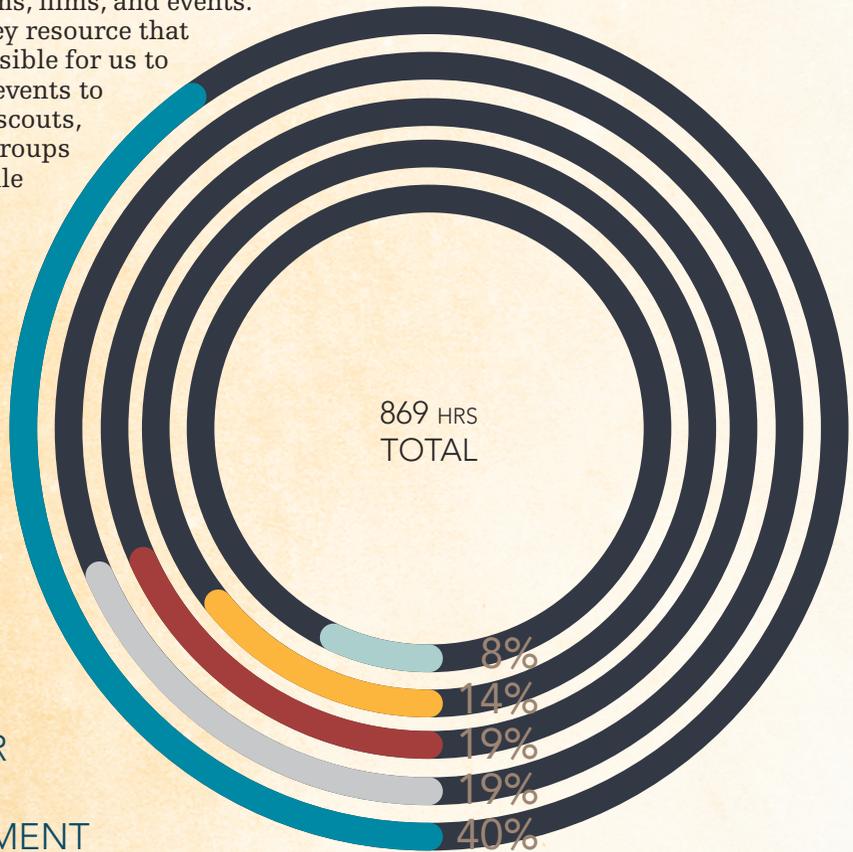
members over the previous year. We held the

**LARGEST** member celebration in a decade.



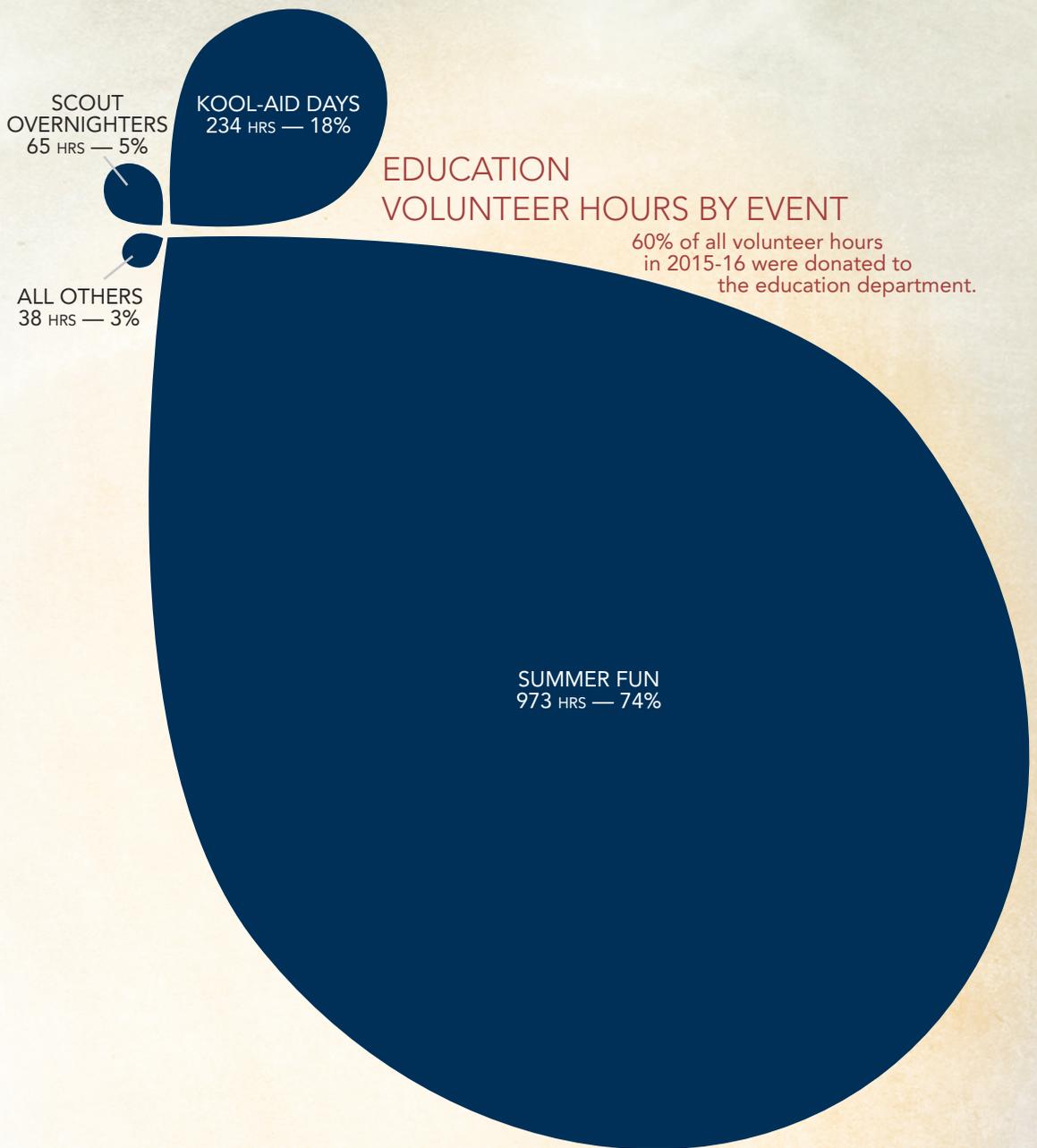
## Volunteers do more than donate their time and talent; often they're the key to new partnerships and community connections.

This year we added 31 new volunteers to our rolls—and these are people who regularly sign up for multiple programs. They don't simply work one event a year. This summer alone we accumulated more than 2,000 donated hours. Volunteers share their unique talents and help us spread the word about our programs, films, and events. They're a key resource that make it possible for us to offer large events to the public, scouts, or private groups that schedule events with multiples stations.



### VOLUNTEER HOURS BY DEPARTMENT EXCLUDING EDUCATION

- COLLECTIONS - 70 HRS
- PLANETARIUM - 119 HRS
- EXHIBITS - 167 HRS
- MARKETING - 166 HRS
- MAINTENANCE - 347 HRS
- EDUCATION - 1,310 HRS (See chart at right)



We reached **6,150** people through programming.  
**1,251** people enjoyed free admission through  
 three sponsored programs. We partnered with **42**  
 community organizations.

## This year we raised the bar on working closely with community partners!

While the Museum is known for its multiple collaborations with a variety of public and private entities, perhaps no collaboration has been more substantial than its current arrangement with the Hastings Public Library. After much discussion between directors, board presidents, and then full boards, an agreement was struck that allowed the Hastings Public Library to move into the east half of the Museum's main level in March 2016. The agreement was welcomed by city leaders, and both the Museum and Library have received positive comments about the arrangement. This partnership is creating programming and relationships we hope to continue after the Library moves in to its renovated building in late 2017.



*Homestead National Monument  
educating patrons at our  
2016 Member Celebration.*

“When HPL was in need, the Museum was a friend indeed. We are excited to continue collaborating closely with them for years to come.”

— Amy Hafer, Director Hastings Public Library

## COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Alia Arram  
Children’s Museum

Boy/Girl Scouts

Central Community College

Chamber of Commerce’s  
New Educator’s Dinner

Chautauqua Youth Camp

Crane Trust

Dutton Lainson

Edgerton Explorit Center

ESU 9

ESU 10

ESU 11

Hastings College

Hastings Public Library

Hastings Public Schools

Homestead National Monument

Institute for Holocaust Education

Hastings Kiwanis

Kool-Aid Days

Morrill Hall

Museum of Nebraska Art

National Night Out

Nebraska Game and Parks

Nebraska History Day

Nebraska Museums Association

Nebraska State Fair

PEO Groups

Plainsman Museum

Prairie Loft

Raising Nebraska

Rotary

Rowe Sanctuary

Sertoma

Sheldon Museum of Art

Stuhr Museum

The Archway

The Frank House

UNL Extension in Adams County

Wessels Living History Farm

Willa Cather Foundation

YMCA Holdrege

## FOUNDATION CONTRIBUTIONS

- \$30,000 Nature Nook Marketing
- \$15,000 New Digital Marquee
- \$5,000 Diorama Hall
- \$4,000 Polar Bear Exhibit Case
- \$4,000 Kool-Aid Exhibit

## GRANTS

- Adams County Convention and Visitors Bureau
- Hastings Community Foundation
- Nebraska Tourism State Marketing Grant
- Humanities Nebraska
- Nebraska Arts Council
- Sunnyside

## MUSEUM SPONSORS

- Runza Restaurants
- Chuck Shoemaker & Lynne Friedewald
- Dutton Lainson
- Hastings Sunrise Rotary
- Quality Sound & Communications
- NTV
- Platte River Radio

## DONORS TO THE HASTINGS MUSEUM & HASTINGS MUSEUM FOUNDATION

### Ashley Kulwicki Summer Fun Scholarship Fund:

- Trisha Rundell
- Ron & Beth Wissing
- Rita Will

### Kool-Aid Book:

- The Kitty M. Perkins Foundation

### Hands-on Exhibit Fund:

- Terry Klatt

### NAD Exhibit Fund:

- Jerry Meyer
- In memory of Orville Roberts

### Memorials:

- Georgia Fast
- Sally Whitcomb

### Marquee:

- Hastings Community Redevelopment Authority

### Nature Nook \$500 & above:

- Rhonda Pauley
- In Memory of Dr. Tom Tonniges
- Aurora Cooperative
- Adams County CVB
- Ann & Robin Koozer

### Unrestricted Donations \$20 & above:

- Anonymous
- Bill & Lou Woods
- Bob Herbek
- Buck Buchholz
- Charles & LaVonna Richards
- Dale Nitzel
- Dennis Towns
- Fred & Carol Mattes
- Dr. George & Colleen Adam
- Harry Salyards
- Jeanine Jamison
- Karen Adams
- Karen Tegler
- Ken Berry
- Kevin Willett
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- Marie Oschner
- Mary and Jorn Olsen
- Pam Smith
- Pat Boyd
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- Rich Halloran
- Richard Hutchins
- Robert Anderson
- Rod & Laverna Epp
- Roger Doerr
- Roger Nunley
- Ronald Wissing
- Russell Felzien
- Sean Daly
- Susan Loeffel
- T. Mark & Charlotte Rodgers



*Cleaning of the fur seals with Jessica Noyd*

## GIVE HASTINGS DAY!

### \$1,000

Lyle Fleharty

### \$500

William Hulsker

### \$250

Becky Matticks

Doug Oakeson

David Schram

### \$150

Zachery Frey

Mark Funkey

### Up to \$100

Fritz Buckallew

Richard Johnson

Laura Beahm

Chandra Muske

Jason & Erin Cafferty

Nannette Shackelford

Larry & Brenda Kuehn

Pam & Tim Smith

Caroline Kemp

Mike Howie

Jessica Meeske & Todd Pankratz

Nikki Pfeil

Kaye Light

Ron & Beth Wissing

Teresa Kreutzer-Hodson

LeRoy Hahn

Marty & Angela Pinkerman

Beth Funkey

Hilarie Redline

Patricia Kneele

Becky Tideman

Amy & William Hermes

## BROOKING SOCIETY DONORS

Gifts made to the Hastings Museum Foundation's annual giving program.

### Whooping Crane up to \$2,500

Lyle & Diann Fleharty

Anonymous

### Blue Heron up to \$1,000

Anonymous

Cal & Jane Johnson

William Hulsker

Jim & Cheryl Kostal

G. Peter & Marcia Konen

Steve & Jill Hornady

The Leroy Thom, Jean Thom,  
and T-L Foundation, Inc.

### Cardinal up to \$500

Tom & Shawn Bramble

Dr. Richard & Linda French

Hastings Irrigation Pipe Co.

Nancy Langford

Dr. Timothy & Barb Lebsack

Dr. David & Marje Little

Wayne & Ila Nelson

Glenda Pauley

Tom & Colleen Pauley

Dr. John & Cathy Pershing

Tim & Hilarie Redline

Dr. & Mrs. Michael Skoch

Jack & Mary Steiner

Spotts Trust

Chris & Amanda Thom

Jacqueline Werner

Randy & Susan Williams

Wilson Case, Inc.

Steve & Danna Wolford

Michael & Nancy Ziemba

Laura Marvel Wunderlich  
In loving memory of  
Alice & Jack Marvel

### Meadowlark up to \$250

Dr. George & Colleen Adam

Greg & Deb Adams

Dr. Jerry & Ora Adler

Drs. Robert & Kathy Anderson

B & B Carpet Service

Dr. & Mrs. Larry Baker

Brian & Patty Bassett

William & Martha Boyd

Bruce Furniture -  
Doug & Donna Bruce

Gary & Evelyn Chingren

Thomas & Jalaene Choquette

Cornerstone Bank

Crane Trust

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Anonymous

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Dave & Pat Gartner

Dr. Jonathan & Mollie Hart

Bob & Jan Herbek

Neal & Susan Hoff

Janet Howe

Michael & Rachelle Johnson

Kenesaw Motor Company

Robin & Ann Koozer

Paul & Lynette Krieger

Dr. George & Sandy Landgren

Kay Laughlin - In memory of  
Robert & Vera (Witte) Laughlin

Keith & Susan Ljunggren

Rebecca Maddox

Dean & Brenda Moors

Dennis & Marlene Mullen

Nelson's Furniture

Michael Nevriyv  
Tracy & Michelle Ochsner  
Mary & Jorn Olsen  
Rhonda Pauley  
William G Pauley III  
Marty & Angie Pinkerman  
Tom & Joan Quinn  
Curtis & Kathy Reimer  
Dr. & Mrs. Alan Robertson  
Ed & Margaret Schlachter  
Dave & Brandee Schram  
Rosalie Snell  
Doug & Marnie Soderquist  
Jane Tonniges  
Justin & Kili Wenburg  
Philip & Colleen Werner  
William & Louan Woods  
Woodward's Disposal Service  
Dan Yost

**Mourning Dove up to \$100**

Al & Mary Kay Anderson  
Matt & Heather Baack  
Dr. Gary Barth & Stacia Lounsbury  
Kathleen Bassett  
Pat & Karen Boyd  
Russell & Joan Bramble  
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Xpress Mart



*Polar bear case remodel with Teresa Kreutzer-Hodson & Jack Briggs.*

## DONORS TO MUSEUM COLLECTION

**Hastings Public Library Hastings, NE**  
Doll collection

**Janet Anderson Kearney, NE**  
Native American artifacts  
In memory of her father Gary Zaruba

**Jerry Josephson Shenandoah, IA**  
Kool-Aid stand

**John & Diane Overturf Edgar, NE**  
Miscellaneous household items

**Frank Medsker Hastings, NE**  
Military photos, post cards, money,  
and documents from World War II

**Vicki Marshall Pleasanton, CA**  
Book on Nebraska State Capital

**Robert Moore Hastings, NE**  
Black light and rocks & minerals book

**Kathy Uldrich Juniata, NE**  
Oil lamp and archival material

**Mary Ann Steinkruger Hastings, NE**  
Cornhusk and apple head dolls

**Rick and Iris Nunley Hastings, NE**  
Kerrco comic book figures

**Aron O'Neill Hastings NE**  
NAD material

*Child enjoying the river  
section of the Nature Nook.*



*Captain Marvel figure  
donated by Rick & Iris Nunley.*



# Hastings Museum

Natural & Cultural History  
Planetarium • Theatre

1330 N. Burlington Ave | Hastings, NE 68901 | 402.461.2399 | HastingsMuseum.org

## STAFF

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Summer Melroy, Secretary

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Jessica Noyd, Registrar  
Jack Briggs, Exhibits Technician  
Curtis Gosser, Graphic Designer  
Phil Rohrbagh, Collections Asst.

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Katie Karr, Education Assistant  
& Volunteer Coordinator  
Kirk Rosberg, Education Assistant  
& Planetarium Coordinator

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Jennifer George, Maintenance  
Sam Matticks, Maintenance  
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Jenna Trausch, Maintenance  
Frankie Roman, Maintenance Asst.

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Curtis Gosser, Graphic Designer

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*Museum staff, family members,  
Miss Kool-Aid Days & Miss Queen City  
at the Kool-Aid Days parade.*